UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
LIMITED

E/ICEF/1992/L.4
6 April 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND
Executive Board
1992 session

POLICY REVIEW

THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF UNICEF PRIORITY TO AFRICA

SUMMARY

UNICEF has accorded priority to Africa as the only region where the numbers of malnourished and dying children are increasing owing to underdevelopment, natural disasters, economic mismanagement, debt, the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) pandemic, inadequate international support and investment, and war. UNICEF has already taken several measures, including support to specific programme strategies for Africa (such as the Bamako Initiative and dracunculiasis (guinea worm disease) elimination strategies) and the strengthening of operational capacity and advocacy activities on the continent.

Recent and ongoing political changes present new opportunities in Africa. To address the needs of African children and women in the 1990s, UNICEF will retain Africa as the region of highest priority through the elaboration of appropriate, sustainable programme strategies, including community empowerment, AIDS prevention and basic education. Existing collaboration with national and regional institutions will be strengthened including the expanded use of African expertise. Staff capacity continues to be strengthened through targeted recruitment and more training. Funding allocations to Africa will increase in line with overall income, with an emphasis on fund-raising for non-emergency countries and with priority allocations from global funds. UNICEF is calling upon Africa and its development partners to form a pact, committing themselves to the achievement of the 1990s goals in Africa and guided by national programmes of action to address country actions. The forthcoming Organization of African Unity conference will assist in this effort.

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CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page
INTRODUCTION	1	4
I. NEED TO PRIORITIZE AFRICA	2 - 11	4
A. Underlying causes	3 - 6	7
B. Structural causes	7 - 9	8
C. Opportunities in the 1990s	10 - 11	9
II. UNICEF RESPONSE IN THE 1980s	12 - 25	10
A. Response through country programmes	13 - 17	11
B. External relations	18 - 19	12
C. Strengthened operational capacity	20 - 24	12
D. Impact of UNICEF actions	25	18
III. FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR UNICEF ACTION IN AFRICA	26 - 43	18
A. National programmes of action	27	18
B. Country programme strategy	28 - 33	19
C. Women	34	21
D. External relations strategy	35 - 37	21
E. Operational support strategy	38 - 43	23
IV. CONCLUSION	44 - 45	25

List of tables

1. Principal social and economic trends in sub-Saharan Africa, 1970-1990 5

2. Comparison of sub-Saharan Africa with other regions, 1980 and 1990 6

3. UNICEF offices in Africa, 1982-1993 13

CONTENTS (continued)

Page

4. UNICEF staff posts in Africa, 1982-1993 15

5. General resources and supplementary funding programme expenditure in Africa, 1980-1991 16

6. Supplementary funding contributions to Africa, 1984-1991 17

INTRODUCTION

1. The present policy review provides information on how UNICEF intends to operationalize its priority attention to Africa as requested in Executive Board decision 1991/13 (E/ICEF/1991/15). The report reviews the reasons UNICEF considers Africa to be the region of highest priority at present, the actions UNICEF is already taking to operationalize this priority and the actions UNICEF intends to take to address further the needs of African children and women. The Executive Board first recognized the need for special attention for Africa in 1984 during the early phases of the famine that severely affected many African countries. Thereafter, the situation received increasing attention, with Executive Board decisions 1986/18 (E/ICEF/1986/12) and 1988/23 (E/ICEF/1988/13), the latter stating that "Africa represents today the greatest development challenge for the remainder of the century". In 1990, the Executive Director informed the Executive Board that Africa should remain the continent of greatest priority for increased attention from UNICEF in the 1990s.

I. NEED TO PRIORITIZE AFRICA

2. UNICEF is prioritizing its actions in Africa because it is the only continent in the world today where the conditions for children have been declining and are expected to worsen in the 1990s. ("Africa" refers to the 44 countries in the UNICEF regions of West and Central, and Eastern and Southern Africa.) While overall infant mortality rates and under-five mortality rates in Africa have been falling, they remain at high levels overall at 108 and 180 per 1,000 live births, respectively. The absolute number of child deaths in Asia is greater than Africa, but the number in Asia is declining rapidly, while in Africa the number of children dying every year is increasing. These trends are illustrated in tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1. Principal social and economic trends in sub-Saharan Africa, 1970-1990

Indicator	Units	1970	1980	1985	1990
Infant mortality rate	Deaths per 1,000 live births	145	125	116	108
Infant deaths a/	Millions per year	1.08	2.1	2.2	2.4
Under-five mortality rate a/	Deaths per 1,000 live births	242	210	195	180
Under-five deaths a/	Millions per year	2.9	3.5	3.7	4.0
Prevalence of underweight under-fives b/	Percentage	30 (1975)	29	31	31
Number of underweight under-fives b/	Millions	18	21	26	30
Maternal mortality rate a/	Deaths per 100,000 live births	-	-	640	630
Maternal deaths a/	Thousands	-	-	130	140
Primary school enrolment ratio (gross) c/	Percentage of primary school age population	46	77	72	76
Secondary school enrolment ratio (gross) c/	Percentage of secondary school age population	7	17	24	24
Female literacy c/	Percentage of females 15 years +	13	-	30	35
Access to safe water a/	Percentage of population	-	30	35	39
GNP per capita d/	Current US$	160	570	480	340
GNP per capita growth rates (period) d/	Average annual percentage	1.7 (1965-1973)	0.6 (1973-1980)	-	-1.2 (1980-1989)
Total population e/	Millions	256	342	398	466

a/ UNICEF, excludes South Africa and the Sudan.

b/ Preliminary estimates of the Subcommittee on Nutrition of the Administrative Committee on Coordination.

c/ UNESCO, excludes South Africa.

d/ World Bank, excludes South Africa.

e/ United Nations Population Division, excludes South Africa and the Sudan.

Table 2. Comparison of sub-Saharan Africa with other regions, 1980 and 1990

Indicator	Unit	1980						1990					
		Sub-Saharan Africa	South Asia	South-East Asia	China	Middle East and North Africa	Latin America and Caribbean	Sub-Saharan Africa	South Asia	South-East Asia	China	Middle East and North Africa	Latin America and Caribbean
Under-five mortality rate a/	Deaths per 1,000 live births	210	188	108	56	145	90	180	152	76	42	95	70
Under-five deaths a/	Millions per year	3.5	6.4	1.5	1.1	1.4	1.0	4.0	6.0	1.1	1.0	1.1	0.9
Prevalence of underweight under-fives a/	Percentage	-	-	-	-	-	-	31	60	36	21	25	11
Number of underweight under-fives a/	Millions	-	-	-	-	-	-	29	99	23	24	12	6
Primary school enrolment ratio (gross) b/	Percentage of primary school age population	77	77	110	110	80	105	76	88	120	120	86	109
Female literacy b/	Percentage of females	-	-	-	-	-	36	-	32	66	66	38	83
Access to safe water a/	Percentage of population	-	-	-	-	-	-	39	72	68	68	74	80
GNP per capita c/	Current US$	570	230	400	400	1 740	1 920	340	330	590	590	1 400	2 180
GNP per capita growth rates (1980-1989)	Average annual percentage	0.6	1.9	4.7	4.7	1.8 e/	2.3	-1.2	2.9	6.3	6.3	0.4 d/	-0.5
Debt service as percentage of exports of goods and services c/		11	12	14	14	21	37	19	25	15	15	33	25
Total debt as a percentage of GNP c/		28	17	17	17	62	35	111	31	27	27	93	41
Total population e/	Millions	342	909	423	996	244	363	466	1 146	519	1 139	328	448

a/ UNICEF; follows UNICEF definition of region.

b/ UNESCO; follows UNESCO definition of regions (see World Education Report 1991).

c/ World Bank; follows World Bank definition of regions (see World Development Report 1991).

d/ Includes middle-income countries of Europe (see World Development Report 1991, p. xi).

e/ United Nations Population Division.

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A. Underlying causes

3. The underlying causes for those tragic figures can be summarized as underdevelopment manifested through poor health care, poor child care and the low status of women, all compounded by the economic setbacks of the 1980s. The continued low rates of child survival in Africa can be linked to population growth outstripping efforts to increase food accessibility and expand education, health and water supply and sanitation services. Less than 50 per cent of all Africans have access to a functioning modern health care system and only 41 per cent to safe water. Even where access to those basic services is available, their quality has declined in the 1980s with, for example, many rural health centres running out of drugs and essential medical supplies. Survival in Africa has also been negatively affected by the increase in the incidence of new diseases such as acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), which estimates indicate will orphan 10 million to 15 million children in Africa by the year 2000, and a resurgence of old diseases such as cholera (affecting 12 African countries in 1991) and malaria. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that, because of AIDS, infant and child mortality in Africa will remain essentially unchanged in the year 2010 compared with 1990 unless a dramatic shift in public awareness and sexual behaviour occurs.

4. United Nations estimates indicate that Africa is the only region where malnutrition prevalence rates did not decline between 1980 and 1990, and thus the number of malnourished children has increased from 21 million to 30 million. The declines in the prevalence of malnutrition observed in the late 1970s were reversed by the famines of the mid-1980s and by economic stagnation. The causes of malnutrition in Africa are inadequate dietary intake and disease, caused by household food insecurity, inadequate health services, together with an unhealthy environment and inadequate care for children and women. Malnutrition has been shown to have a negative synergistic effect on disease-specific mortality rates. Projections indicate that little progress in reducing the prevalence of malnutrition can be expected in Africa in the 1990s unless a comprehensive approach to nutrition is implemented, and that the situation will remain vulnerable to further setbacks.

5. The development of African children is also hampered by the poor learning opportunities on the continent. Access to primary education appears to have declined in the 1980s from 74 per cent in 1980 to 68 per cent in 1990. The quality of education has also declined as the resources for schools were barely able to cover teachers' salaries, with little left over for books and teaching materials. Non-formal and adult education services have not grown sufficiently to meet demands. The progress made in some countries after independence in integrating girls into schools was brought to a halt as the direct costs of education to parents increased. As a result, more than 70 per cent of women in Africa aged 25 years and over are illiterate (while illiteracy rates are 52 per cent overall), and fewer than 30 women per 100 men are enrolled in higher education in the region. Existing forms of formal education increasingly became less relevant in some African countries as economies stagnated or went into recession; schools were simply not prepared

to equip their pupils with the practical or survival skills required for the changing situation. As a result of weak health and family life skills education, as well as of the exclusion of girls from schools, the expected impact of educational expansion on reducing fertility in Africa did not materialize, with fertility rates of 6.2 births per woman being the highest average of all regions. Customary education systems, conveying values and cultural identities, declined in the face of the new living arrangements brought on by urbanization and the resettlement of displaced families.

6. The situation of African women is hardly better than that of their children. It continues to be impeded by social attitudes and preferences that privilege boys and men and undervalue (and limit the investment in) girls and women. African women continue to work hard and long, doing more agricultural work than women in any other region of the world, but their limited access to capital and modern technology reduces their productivity and increases the human effort required. Most economic reform programmes have not addressed the needs for improving women's productivity. Women's health in Africa is poor, with over 75 per cent having anaemia. African women also have the second highest maternal mortality rate (MMR) in the world, with an average of 626 per 100,000 live births, resulting in over 140,000 deaths every year. Often women in Africa have to confront three layers of legal systems - customary, religious and modern - very few of which ensure the equal rights of women to property ownership and inheritance, to marriage and divorce, and to personal safety. Overall, the traditional marginalization of women has been exacerbated in the modern legal, political and economic systems, resulting in women becoming low productivity workers in both rural and urban areas.

B. Structural causes

7. The structural causes of the conditions facing children and women in Africa at the beginning of the 1990s are complex. The common thread is the economic decline that has affected most of Africa since the mid-1970s. Per capita income fell by an average of 25 per cent over the 1980s, with less than one quarter of the countries showing a positive per capita growth rate. The overall growth of the gross domestic product was 2.1 per cent for the period 1980-1989, while the population grew at an average of 3.2 per cent over the same period. At the household level, this decline in income has been reflected by a decrease in the number of households able to secure their food supply, either by production or by purchase. Reduced exports (an average of -1.3 per cent for 1980-1987), declines in direct foreign investment (below $0.5 billion per annum for all non-oil exporting African countries combined over 1981-1989), stagnation in official development assistance (ODA) (with the 1990 ODA from all sources to Africa totalling that provided in 1989 in constant dollars), increases in debt (from 97 per cent of annual exports in 1980 to 330 per cent in 1990) and the mis-investment of available resources (including large military expenditures and the inappropriateness of certain domestic and aid investments) are among the factors that have affected nearly all African countries. In some countries, these human factors have been compounded by natural causes such as droughts, floods and pests, and by degradations in the environment brought about by drought and over-grazing.

8. War and civil strife have also been major causes of the declining living standards of children and women in Africa. About 4 million Africans are refugees, and a further 40 million are displaced within their own countries, the greatest numbers of these being in the Horn of Africa and in southern Africa, with many children being traumatized as their families flee conflict or drought. Southern Africa has been a special case where it is estimated that over 1.2 million children under five years old have died in the 1980s, either directly or indirectly, owing to the effects of the destabilization created by apartheid.

9. One cause of these conflicts is that in many African countries, the expansion of the basic human rights of survival, protection and development brought about by independence was not always sustained (in some cases it was eroded by corruption and economic mismanagement) in the difficult economic times that followed, to the detriment of vulnerable groups such as children and women. Many African Governments have adopted policies of economic reform to promote growth. These policies, while in themselves not a cause of increasing poverty and declining living standards, resulted in sharp restrictions in the monetary supply as debts were repaid, fiscal discipline was imposed and government expenditure was curtailed. These features of economic reform had a negative impact on the conditions of children and women, especially in countries unable to offer compensatory programmes. The expected benefits of economic growth have not been felt as there is no decisive economic reform success in Africa, except in Mauritius. African Governments have made determined efforts to address human development in the context of economic reform programmes, but their options for action have usually been constrained by the external economic environment and by the policy priorities of their development partners.

C. Opportunities in the 1990s

10. An unprecedented conjuncture of internal and external political and economic forces in Africa at the end of the 1980s has stimulated rapid political change in many countries simultaneously, making the early 1990s comparable only to the era of independence in terms of the potential for transforming people's lives. The main effect of this political transition process is to bestow greater political legitimacy on Governments that will need it to sustain popular support for the economic transformations required in the years ahead. Another expected effect is the rapid extension of meaningful popular participation in economic and social decision-making, with more trust and dialogue between citizens and their Governments. Other likely results include an increase in transparent and accountable Government, widespread decentralization and reductions in military and security expenditure. The hope is that these political changes will bring about more stable and responsive Governments; a decline in wars, civil strife and internal violence; a decline in the numbers of refugees and displaced families; and an increase in public resources allocated by African Governments for human development.

11. Such political changes present great opportunities for African children and women to improve their lives in the 1990s. While the constraints and the sense of pessimism both within and outside Africa about the future are very real, it must be recalled that, in the past, Africa achieved a great deal despite a very limited resource base, achievements greater perhaps than other regions with similar resource limitations. Nevertheless, the World Bank estimates that average per capita gross national product (GNP) incomes in Africa are expected to grow less than 1 per cent a year in the first half of the 1990s, and about 0.5 per cent on average annually through the decade. The overwhelming size of the African debt (estimated at $161 billion) in relation to the African GNP ($144 billion per annum) continues to drain declining export earnings away from new investments. These economic constraints will limit the options for African Governments, as will the political and macroeconomic conditionalities that external bilateral and multilateral donors will impose on ODA in the 1990s. Continued environmental degradation and the possibility of a recurrence of drought in southern Africa will also impose their own burdens on African development. The challenge of the 1990s will be to address the needs of children and women at a time when no great expansion of the economic resource base is foreseen.

II. UNICEF RESPONSE IN THE 1980s

12. UNICEF has consistently accorded priority to Africa in its activities. At the overall policy level, the Executive Director has maintained close contacts with a number of African leaders and Governments directly and at heads of State summits of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which have passed several resolutions supporting African children. UNICEF was one of the original supporters of the United Nations Office for Emergency Operations in Africa, and also supported the task force, led by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), that promoted the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UNPAAERD). UNICEF provided considerable support to the UNPAAERD Khartoum Conference on the Human Dimension of Africa's Economic Recovery and Development and the Arusha Conference on Popular Participation in African Recovery and Development. It has also supported the UNPAAERD secretariat and the publication of Africa Emergency and, later, Africa Recovery. UNICEF developed and promoted the policy alternatives for the protection of the poor during economic reform under the rubric of adjustment with a human face. The organization has established specific collaborative mechanisms with other agencies to address the needs of Africa: with the WHO Regional Office for Africa on the development of primary health care (PHC); with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and WHO on nutrition; and with the World Bank on health and basic education. UNICEF has also been an active supporter of the work of the inter-agency Joint Consultative Group on Policy on Africa.

A. Response through country programmes

13. The central part of the UNICEF response to the priority for Africa is through the country programme strategy. The programmatic thrust in Africa has evolved from a focus on basic services, to a focus on child survival (and later protection) and development, which was later framed by the goals for children and development in the 1990s and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Should all the 1990s goals be achieved in Africa, over 2.1 million children under five years of age will be saved in the year 2000, and over 50,000 maternal deaths will be averted compared with 1990. Even more lives would be saved when compared with the number of deaths expected if the 1990 trends continued unabated to the year 2000. A major country programming strategy has been to strengthen national capacities to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate national and area-based programmes for children and women. This has been facilitated by, among other measures, using national and regional experts and institutions, especially national universities which have often participated in the preparation of situation analyses of children and women. With emergencies in Africa being widespread and recurrent, UNICEF has developed policies for rapidly adapting regular programmes to emergencies as they arise, and to incorporate rehabilitation actions into relief measures.

14. In the area of child survival, UNICEF has placed priority on the reduction of immunizable diseases and diarrhoea in Africa. The Bamako Initiative strategy, initially proposed at a WHO Regional Office for Africa meeting of ministers of health in 1987, has been successful in gradually involving communities in the management and financing of health services, thus helping to sustain health coverage. UNICEF water supply and sanitation strategies in Africa have been adapted to address more closely hygiene education and the community maintenance of water systems. There have been new attempts to address the resurgence of malaria through UNICEF support for pilot research activities. The new nutrition strategy, based largely on experience in nutrition programmes in Africa, has been introduced, with malnutrition levels appearing to be systematically reduced in the target communities.

15. UNICEF support for programming for child development in Africa has been more limited, as the needs for the immediate survival of children and women were more pressing. The main strategic intervention was to sponsor the regional meetings of African ministers of education, with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), prior to the World Conference on Education for All. The implementation of early childhood care and development has accelerated in Africa in recent years, especially through community day-care centres. UNICEF has been a major advocate for the education of girls and women in Africa.

16. The concept of child protection, a new one in Africa, has come to prominence owing to the growing phenomenon of street children in cities and of children traumatized by war and violence. UNICEF has assisted in the demobilization of child soldiers and in reuniting families separated by attacks. UNICEF initiated and promoted a policy of "children as zones of peace", further elaborated as "corridors of peace", to reach children and

women caught in conflict. UNICEF has also supported the Africa Network on the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect and the OAU Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child.

17. UNICEF supported an integrated programme strategy for women by which women's concerns are tangibly addressed in all aspects of country programmes in Africa. UNICEF has assisted women's training programmes to strengthen national policy institutions, expand food production and income-generating opportunities, and provide appropriate labour- and energy-saving technology for women. A focus on the excessively high MMRs and the incidence of female mutilation in Africa highlighted the need for safe motherhood programmes, now included in some country programmes. UNICEF also supported the African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW).

B. External relations

18. The UNICEF response to the priority for Africa included strengthened advocacy, such as support to SportAid, USA for Africa, the Day of the African Child and the publication of Children on the Frontline, about victims of apartheid in southern Africa. Through UNICEF advocacy for the adjustment with a human face strategy at consultative group meetings, support for country studies on the impact of economic reform programmes, continuous policy dialogue with African Governments, as well as through the publication of Within Human Reach, several measures to protect poor and vulnerable groups were incorporated into economic reform policy in Africa, especially in the areas of household food security and food policy. UNICEF has supported the involvement of African parliamentarians, artists and intellectuals in child survival, protection and development.

19. National Committees for UNICEF have regularly supported UNICEF activities in Africa. Through the circulation of UNICEF publications and videos, they have contributed to increased public awareness of the situation and needs of Africa in industrialized countries. At the same time, their advocacy has facilitated direct fund-raising campaigns for programmes in Africa and has promoted UNICEF programmes with their respective Governments. National Committees also support Education for Development courses for students, trade union members, etc., on the situation of children in Africa. In 1991, the National Committees met in Africa, as did the Non-governmental Organization (NGO) Committee for UNICEF. Africa has also been the focus for UNICEF media support, with several co-productions of television and radio programmes taking place in Africa. UNICEF has also facilitated visits by journalists from the international media to Africa to observe development activities.

C. Strengthened operational capacity

20. A key strategy by which UNICEF has been responding to the priority for Africa has been to strengthen UNICEF operational capacity on the continent. This was developed as a result of a management review carried out in 1983.

The major growth in UNICEF field presence in Africa is comparatively recent, taking place from the 1984-1985 biennium onwards. The growth in UNICEF offices is shown in table 3 below. Africa has also benefited from the Capital Asset Fund established in 1988 to cover the costs of field office construction, with 16 per cent of the commitments made from the Fund up to the end of 1991 allocated to field offices in Africa.

Table 3. UNICEF offices in Africa, 1982-1993

Biennium	Regional offices	Country and area offices	National sub-offices a/	Total
1982-1983	2	11	28	41 b/
1984-1985	2	14	26	42
1986-1987	2	25	15	42
1988-1989	2	27	13	42
1990-1991	2	31	11	44 c/
1992-1993 d/	2	34	8	44

Source: Budget Section, UNICEF Division of Financial Management.

a/ National sub-offices include liaison offices.

b/ Most offices opened in 1983.

c/ Includes country offices opened in two countries which also host regional offices.

d/ As at beginning 1992.

21. The staffing strength in Africa has risen with the expansion of UNICEF programmes on the continent, although through increases in efficiency, average programme expenditure throughput per post in Africa was 52 per cent higher in 1990 than in 1982. Some 48 per cent of all new core posts created in the 1990-1991 biennium were in Africa. While ratios of National Officers to all Professional staff are lower in Africa than in Asia (38 and 41 per cent for Eastern and Southern Africa and West and Central Africa, respectively), East Asia and the Pacific, and South Asia had 44 and 57 per cent, respectively, in 1990, which is a reflection of the greater national capacity in Asia. The

number of National Professional staff posts in Africa has grown from 42 in 1980 to 309 in 1992. The evolution of UNICEF staff posts in Africa is shown in table 4 below.

22. In addition to increases in numbers, there has been a qualitative increase in the staff capacity in Africa through training (39 per cent of all 1991 staff training funds were spent in Africa, which accounts for 34 per cent of all staff in UNICEF). Vacancy rates in Africa have been no higher than in other regions, but they are compounded by the frequency of staff movement, which is higher in Africa owing to the shorter duration of postings, due, in turn, to the difficult and often insecure living conditions. UNICEF capacity in Africa has also been augmented by regional and headquarter advisers, the latter having made Africa the priority in their annual work plans since 1990. Technical consultants have also been recruited from African regional institutions such as the Eastern and Southern Africa Management Institute (ESAMI) and the Institut Pan-africain de développement (IPD) (Pan-African Institute for Development). In 1990, 77 per cent of all 1,088 individual consultants recruited for Africa were African nationals, while 89 per cent of all 107 institutional contracts were allocated to institutions in Africa.

23. Central to UNICEF priority attention to Africa has been the expansion of country programme budgets. The exceptional growth in income in the mid-1980s was partly a result of the drought crisis in Africa, which generated significant emergency contributions, and partly due to a large donation from one donor country for child survival in Africa. As shown in table 5 below, general resources and supplementary funding expenditures in Africa increased sharply, with 1990 general resources up by nearly 200 per cent and supplementary funding up by nearly 650 per cent over 1980. However, Africa's share of total UNICEF expenditures rose only in the early 1980s, from 22 per cent in 1980 to 38 per cent in 1985, and remained steady at about 35 per cent from 1987. These increases in the minimum general resources country programme budgets, together with additional general resources allocations from global funds and reserves, have maintained Africa's share of total expenditure, even though supplementary funding contributions have shown great variation from year to year and from country to country. In the late 1980s, some countries continued to receive large emergency contributions, while others (especially non-emergency countries) lost the attention of donors who, by the end of the decade, were beginning to see their concerns drawn towards the Middle East and Eastern Europe. In 1991, for example, 11 African countries received about $32.7 million for emergency programmes, equivalent to over $4 per affected child, while 30 non-emergency African countries received $52.0 million, or about $0.55 per child. Overall, Africa's share of total supplementary funding contributions declined from 53 per cent in 1984 to 29 per cent in 1991, although the actual amount received increased from $55.6 million to $84.7 million.

Table 4. UNICEF staff posts in Africa, 1982-1993

Biennium a/	Core posts IP	NO	GS	Non-core posts IP	NO	GS	JPOs b/	Total posts in Africa	Total all UNICEF posts c/	Percentage of UNICEF posts in Africa
1982-1983	79	31	207	132	30	159	33	671	3 211	21
1984-1985	89	48	296	189	45	198	28	89	3 638	25
1986-1987	126	74	380	214	78	306	33	1 211	4 000	30
1988-1989	115	63	342	271	113	481	45	1 430	4 291	33
1990-1991	118	64	349	303	176	650	41	1 701	4 996	34
1992-1993 d/	134	87	372	338	222	842	37	2 032	5 665	36

Source: Budget Section, UNICEF Division of Financial Management.

IP = International Professional.

NO = National officer.

GS = General Service.

JPOs = Junior Professional Officers.

a/ All data are as at end of first year of biennium, except 1992-1993.

b/ Sponsored posts.

c/ All UNICEF staff includes staff at all headquarters stations and staff financed by reimbursable procurement.

d/ Estimates for beginning 1992.

Table 5. General resources and supplementary funding programme expenditure in Africa, 1980-1991

(In millions of United States dollars)

Year	General resources expenditure in Africa	Supplementary funding expenditure in Africa	Total expenditure in Africa	Total expenditure in all countries	Percentage African expenditure of total
1980	42.3	12.3	54.6	251.7	22
1981	43.7	12.3	56.0	218.2	26
1982	42.9	13.2	56.1	213.0	26
1983	42.2	23.7	65.9	246.1	27
1984	46.1	32.4	78.5	243.1	32
1985	49.2	56.7	105.9	278.6	38
1986	52.2	47.1	99.3	325.9	30
1987	55.8	75.3	131.1	365.8	36
1988	61.2	84.8	146.0	399.5	37
1989	97.2	72.8	170.0	501.1	34
1990	126.0	90.4	216.4	584.3	37
1991 a/	128.5	82.0	210.5	591.0	36

Source: Programme Statistics Section, UNICEF Programme Division.

a/ Figures for 1991 are estimates.

24. The increases in supplementary funding contributions have come about through increases in the size and, generally, the quality of African country programmes submitted to the Executive Board and to donors. These programmes have benefited from a targeted fund-raising strategy that has Africa as its top priority. Of all supplementary funding contributions received in 1991, 29 per cent were for African countries, although 1991 supplementary funding proposals for Africa account for about 40 per cent of all proposals in the UNICEF "salesbook"; contributions to Africa in 1990 were 25 per cent of the total, while the number of proposals then comprised 52 per cent of the "salesbook". These proportions, while representing larger amounts, are lower than the 53 per cent of all supplementary funding contributions that Africa received in 1984, as shown in table 6 below.

Table 6. Supplementary funding contributions to Africa, 1984-1991

(In millions of United States dollars)

Year	Supplementary funding contributions to: Regular programmes in all countries	Of which to Africa	Regular programme percentage to Africa	Emergency programmes in all countries	Of which to Africa	Emergency programme percentage to Africa	Total SF contributions (regular and emergency) to all countries	Of which to Africa	Percentage of total
1984	80.5	33.0	41	25.0	22.6	90	105.5	55.6	53
1985	80.6	13.2	16	51.1	39.0	76	131.7	52.2	40
1986	134.6	38.2	28	32.0	22.0	69	166.6	60.2	36
1987	198.7	52.0	26	28.0	22.3	80	226.7	74.3	33
1988	236.2	73.2	31	39.5	24.2	61	275.7	97.4	35
1989	189.6	65.3	34	57.3	18.5	32	246.9	83.8	34
1990	225.3	52.5	23	56.7	18.2	32	282.0	70.7	25
1991 a/	184.0	52.0	28	108.4	32.7	30	292.4	84.7	29

Source: UNICEF Programme Funding Office and Division of Financial Management.

a/ 1991 figures are estimates.

D. Impact of UNICEF actions

25. The priority that UNICEF has accorded to Africa has had positive results. The most telling of those is the nearly 500,000 deaths from vaccine-preventable diseases that were averted in 1990 alone as an outcome of the drive for universal child immunization (UCI), launched with the assistance of WHO and other agencies. By 1990, UCI had been achieved in 17 African countries. What is remarkable about the results is that they were achieved at a time when national incomes in Africa were declining, clearly demonstrating that national will and commitment to children can, with modest external assistance, overcome the barriers to improving the lives of African children and women. Other results include the expansion of PHC; the strengthening of health and hygiene education; the start of the elimination of dracunculiasis; and the increased emphasis on programme sustainability, especially in health (through the Bamako Initiative strategy), water supply (through community maintenance) and nutrition (through household food security). Despite these successes, overall gains for children have not been as much as they have in other regions, principally because political and economic stability was widely lacking in Africa, negating the potential programme impacts and destabilizing families, communities and nations.

III. FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR UNICEF ACTION IN AFRICA

26. What is the UNICEF mission in Africa in the 1990s? Africa, as the most disadvantaged region in the world from the perspective of children and women, will remain the region of highest priority to UNICEF. In 1992, the organization's strategy was clearly established, with "improving prospects for Africa" set as the second of 11 internal corporate goals. Africa is a clear priority in the UNICEF medium-term plan for the period 1992-1995 (E/ICEF/1992/3). Consideration of the needs of Africa, and the catalytic role UNICEF could play, will be paramount in the development of all new UNICEF policy and strategy initiatives in the 1990s. UNICEF is committed to supporting the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s called for by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1991, which also incorporates the 1990s goals.

A. National programmes of action

27. One of the greatest opportunities for African Governments and communities is to adapt and adopt the 1990s goals, reviewing the whole process of development in Africa and situating it in the context of preparing a better world for African children in the twenty-first century, based on the principle of a "first call for children". Thus, the 1990s goals would become the benchmarks by which human development in Africa would be measured. All institutions in Africa - especially, but not exclusively, Governments - need to spell out how they will arrive at a common understanding on the actions to address the needs of African children by preparing sound, credible national programmes of action as proposed by the World Summit for Children. A shared

perception of the devastating impact that the current environment facing African children has on their survival and development, and the impact that these impoverished children will later have on their environment, must be developed between Africa and its development partners, and translated into a shared commitment to action. To achieve this common understanding and commitment, the global community must take a moral stand - above geo-political interests - that the rights of African children are equal to the rights of children everywhere. The ambitious 1990s goals will by no means be easy to achieve in Africa. The role of external assistance will be crucial as it is estimated that, in Africa, over 50 per cent of the resources needed to achieve the 1990s goals will have to come from the global community, compared with the one third or less required for other regions. The forthcoming OAU International Donors Conference on Assistance to African Children will be an important forum for African and donor Governments to discuss the prospects for children in Africa. At the national level, it will stimulate debate on the national programmes of action and review of each country's national programme with its development partners. More specifically, it is hoped that the Conference will lead to a process of donor commitment to support the achievement of the 1990s goals in the longer run on a country-by-country basis. On a wider scale, the conference will provide African countries with the opportunity to restructure national budgets in favour of children and women, and donor countries with the opportunity to ensure that their ongoing assistance supports and targets these groups. Some restructuring actions have already begun, with several African countries making important budgetary changes in favour of human development.

B. Country programme strategy

28. UNICEF country programmes in Africa will be integrated with and supportive of the national programmes of action. This will be enabled by the basic country programme approach, which is founded on the creation of a self-sustaining capacity for the provision of basic services for children and women. UNICEF efforts, wherever appropriate, will support decentralized structures of Governments, NGOs and communities through area-based programmes. The role of UNICEF, however, will be to assist (and not substitute for) the Government in supporting the process of decentralized change and development. These capacity-building efforts will be linked to advocacy for, and the development of, relevant national policies and national-level capacities. The empowerment of women in legal, political and economic terms will be central to this process, implying the need to provide the relevant skills and knowledge to women to enable them to define their interests, articulate their needs and participate in the decisions necessary to fulfil these needs. Partnership with local institutions, experts and NGOs and with regional technical bodies such as ATRCW, ECA, ESAMI and IPD will be fundamental to this development approach.

29. In Africa, UNICEF will place increased emphasis on sustainable strategies for development, such as the Bamako Initiative strategy, which could be adapted for other sectoral areas such as basic education and water supply and sanitation. As emergencies are expected to occur in Africa through the 1990s, UNICEF will improve the timeliness and relevance of its response, including the more rapid adaptation of existing country programmes to address emergencies created by political instability. Social mobilization strategies, emphasizing rural radio broadcasting and collaboration with indigenous NGOs, will be broadened to address more specifically the issue of behavioural change in Africa, especially with respect to the reduction of the transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and improvements in family hygiene practices.

30. The central theme for child survival programming in Africa will be to empower communities to build a healthy environment and to ensure access to basic health care through the development of district health services. The Bamako Initiatve strategy will promote health policy development, confronting the issue of financing the sustainability and expansion of health systems as a means of increasing peoples' access to quality health services, especially the six major health interventions: UCI; the control of malaria, diarrhoeal diseases, HIV transmission and acute respiratory infections (ARI); and safe motherhood (including family spacing). Particular priorities for Africa will be to achieve and sustain UCI levels and to reduce the prevalence of malnutrition. Other strategies include the strengthening of epidemiological capacity and the rational use of essential drugs, both in collaboration with WHO. The political changes in Africa tend to create a receptive environment for popular participation in development, meaning that child and maternal malnutrition can be better addressed in Africa in the 1990s through household food security and health education.

31. The reduction of HIV transmission in Africa will demand the expansion and broader dissemination of the current experience with behaviour change, targeting youth, particularly schoolchildren and teenage parents. More effective monitoring of the impact of programmes aimed at behaviour change through evaluation will be undertaken. This will also strengthen hygiene education programmes, which are essential for reducing diarrhoea incidence in Africa. The development of national water supply and sanitation policies that support low-cost, community maintained systems will be extended. UNICEF is expected to lead United Nations agencies in supporting low-cost water supply programmes for rural communities. With better health education and disease surveillance, the elimination of dracunculiasis is possible in Africa. Particular emphasis will be placed on collaboration with the Organisation de coordination et de coopération pour la lutte contre les grands endémies (OCCGE) and the subregional Inter-Agency Technical Support Assistance Centre established in Burkina Faso with UNICEF support.

32. The longer-term benefits of future UNICEF action in Africa will be derived from the new strategies for child development programming using the Education For All strategy based on the Jomtien Declaration of the World Conference. Education will be the key element in building human capacity at

the community level and in empowering communities, especially women. Networks of government, NGO and UNICEF staff will review and formulate proposals to enable sustainable basic education to revert rapidly to being a significant element of UNICEF support in Africa that is linked to national capacity-building programmes, especially with local universities. In early child care and development, the emphasis of UNICEF action in Africa will be on assisting communities to establish and manage day-care services for children which, together with families, effectively prepare children for better learning, whether formal or non-formal. Support to community child-care arrangements, including the socialization of the child and the reduction in women's workload, will also be undertaken.

33. The concept of child protection in Africa requires extensive advocacy to gain wider acceptance at family, community and national levels. One starting point will be to sponsor a review of national legislations in Africa to see where changes are needed to bring them into conformity with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The current period of political transition, when national constitutions and laws are being reviewed, is ideal to extend laws governing child protection. UNICEF will also extend support to family tracing services (as wars end), urban child services (as the numbers of street children - especially girls - increase) and community-based child care (as the numbers of children orphaned by AIDS increase).

C. Women

34. Changing the role and status of women is fundamental to the overall UNICEF programming strategy in Africa for the 1990s. A major thrust will be on strengthening UNICEF advocacy for the rights of women and girls, using the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. UNICEF will focus on the development of alternative strategies for supporting the provision of health and educational services to women and girls unreached by conventional services. Women will be assisted, through strengthening their integration into existing institutions, to build up the economic capacity to be equal partners in community decision-making. The burden on women will be reduced by incorporating time and labour assessments into community development strategies and by integrating child care and labour-saving technologies into women's economic development activities.

D. External relations strategy

35. Future UNICEF actions in Africa will depend largely on gaining broad cross-institutional support to achieve the 1990s goals. Seeking out and drawing other partners, especially indigenous NGOs, into this effort through effective external relations will, therefore, be central to UNICEF policies in Africa in the 1990s. An important thrust will be support for the principles of adjustment with a human face at subnational and local government levels as decentralization gains ground. Advocacy for children and women will also be

supported, especially at high-level meetings such as those of the United Nations, OAU, the Commonwealth, Francophone countries and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Technical meetings of ministers, under the auspices of OAU, will be an important channel to advocate for national policy and strategy evolution prioritizing children and women. Regional bodies such as ECA, the Southern African Development Coordination Conference, the Economic Community of Western African States, the Arab Maghreb Union and the Preferential Trade Area of Eastern and Southern Africa will also serve as forums for advocating for child survival, protection and development within the framework of their respective mandates. Other strategies include the continuation of the Day of the African Child as a global advocacy event and support for advocacy through groups such as religious leaders and professional associations. Publications will remain a key tool for creating awareness about issues affecting children and women in Africa.

36. The contribution of the National Committees for UNICEF to Africa in the 1990s will be facilitated by the joint planning of activities between them and UNICEF offices in Africa, by the establishment of "twinning" arrangements between National Committees and certain country programmes, and through the strengthening of Education for Development activities by including African educators in the preparation of curricula and materials. National Committees will continue to be important sponsors of publications, as well as of radio and television productions on Africa. UNICEF intends to strengthen relations with the media to help dispel the negative perception of Africa in the media of the industrialized world and to produce special reports on children and women in Africa, starting in 1992, that give a more balanced view of human development in Africa. Special efforts will be made to train UNICEF staff in Africa to work with the media, especially in emergency situations. A key element in strengthening communications will be the expanded use of electronic communications within, between, and to and from African countries for sharing information on the development of children and women for enhanced technical cooperation among developing countries.

37. UNICEF participation in inter-agency collaboration in the 1990s will aim at promoting coherent policies of agency assistance to national and regional capacity-building, national policy formulation and national programme development through joint sector reviews, project appraisals and evaluations with United Nations agencies, the World Bank, bilateral and multilateral donors, and international NGOs. UNICEF will advocate strongly for the 1990s goals as targets for all development agencies in Africa, particularly in the context of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa, and for the continued dissemination of information on Africa through Africa Recovery. In addition, UNICEF will promote the prioritization of Africa in UNICEF joint activities with other United Nations agencies: with WHO in strengthening district health services and on health interventions such as ARI; with ECA, FAO and WHO for the Africa Decade of Food and Nutrition (1992-2002); and with UNESCO for basic education.

E. Operational support strategy

38. The foundation of future UNICEF action in Africa will be the ongoing strengthening of UNICEF operational capacity. The establishment of a minimum core staff capacity in all offices and the upgrading to full country office status of the remaining 10 countries in Africa will occur, as appropriate. The new offices will be supported by headquarters and the relevant regional offices to ensure that they become fully functional as quickly as possible. Operational capacity will be improved by reducing vacancy rates of approved posts in Africa through pro-active and targeted recruitment, and by improving the induction of new personnel to make them effective more quickly. Regional support capacity will be strengthened through the devolution of technical advisory capacity from headquarters, including support for key programmes such as the Bamako Initiative strategy, child survival, AIDS prevention and evaluation and monitoring. Wherever possible, country programmes with similar concerns will share technical advisory capacity, including national expertise and regional institutions.

39. As outlined above, UNICEF programme strategy in Africa will require improvements in the cost-effectiveness, transparency and accountability of country programmes. It will also emphasize capacity-building over the delivery of inputs, and will focus on district- and community-level action for community empowerment. This shift in the responsibilities of UNICEF field staff will be reflected in the profile of UNICEF staff posted to Africa. UNICEF representatives and staff will be required to offer the very best in professional knowledge and advocacy skills to complement those of the increasing numbers of skilled African nationals. Changes in staff composition can be expected through the recruitment of more women, the use of more national capacity through the establishment of more National Officer posts and the increased use of national and regional expertise, as well as of local institutions. UNICEF plans to post staff of the highest competence to Africa during the 1990s, encouraging staff from all regions of the world to serve in Africa through incentives such as making service in Africa a favourable consideration for assignment to senior management positions.

40. UNICEF staff are the essential element for realizing the priority for Africa in the 1990s. Staff capacity in Africa will be strengthened, although not always in numerical terms. The expected trends in total staff numbers are shown in the medium-term plan, with Africa expected to maintain about 36 per cent of all staff. One way of increasing UNICEF capacity in Africa without increasing the number of posts beyond affordable levels will be to strengthen the competencies of staff assigned to existing posts. One attribute to be especially encouraged is multi-lingualism (important in Africa where no less than four official United Nations languages are used by different countries) to facilitate the easy transfer of staff to and within Africa. An objective of UNICEF in the 1990s will be to issue all technical, administrative and financial guidelines and all staff training materials in all the UNICEF working languages used on the continent. The knowledge of local languages will become more important as community-level actions become prioritized. Computer literacy will also be crucial as electronic

communications expands in Africa. Competencies of existing staff in Africa will be improved through strengthened training programmes that focus on improving programme management, implementation and accountability, with special emphasis on programmatic thrusts such as malaria, AIDS prevention and social mobilization for empowerment. They will be further strengthened by facilitating information-sharing networks between technical staff in similar disciplines, including headquarter and regional advisers, and staff from other agencies and national and regional institutions.

41. All the above will not be possible without a significant increase in funding for programmes for children and women in Africa. General resources allocations to Africa can be expected to grow slowly, but steadily, through the decade. This growth in the levels of assistance to country programmes in Africa, while being dependent on UNICEF overall income, will be aided by Africa being the highest priority in allocations from the Interregional Fund for Programme Preparation, Promotion and Evaluation and from the global general resources-funded Programme Funds for the 1990s Goals. Increases in minimum programme budget levels during the decade also account for the growth in general resources allocations to Africa, as does the priority accorded to Africa in the allocation of any surplus general resources to unfunded supplementary funding programmes. However, the latter factor will have only a limited effect in the early part of the decade as general resources income is expected to closely match planned expenditure. General resources allocations, while still dependent on contributions, are a more reliable source of funding than supplementary funding, and thus vital for high-quality programme planning and implementation in the unstable conditions and with the weak institutional capacity in Africa. Growth in supplementary funding income is much more difficult to project as much depends on political factors, as well as on the quality of programmes submitted to the Executive Board and the size of emergency appeals. Supplementary funding contributions to Africa in the 1990s are not expected to grow much in real terms. In order to derive maximum benefit from the internal reallocations and restructuring expected in Africa towards achieving the 1990s goals, supplementary funding contributions to Africa should increase at least to the mid-1980 level of about 50 per cent of all supplementary funding contributions.

42. To ensure that sufficient resources are available, UNICEF has made Africa the fund-raising priority for the 1990s. Fund-raising strategies similar to those used for the successful UCI programmes will be deployed for this wider effort in Africa. Increases in national counterpart contributions, especially from the larger or higher-income countries, will be encouraged. Private sector fund-raising activities will be initiated in several African countries with active private sectors, while private sector fund-raising activities in industrialized countries will be expanded in 1992 with the launch of fund-raising documentation kits. To complement the fund-raising activities for UNICEF programmes in Africa, UNICEF will continue to support the allocation of increased resources to activities benefiting children and women in Africa through channels other than UNICEF. Specifically, UNICEF will encourage African Governments to restructure their budgets in favour of children and women, using resources gained from reduced military expenditure

and increased efficiency. In addition, UNICEF will continue to support efforts for commercial debt relief for Africa, including debt swaps and debt buy-backs for development (where this can be done without fuelling inflation), debt conversion (under Paris Club arrangements) and structural adjustment compensatory programmes. UNICEF will also collaborate with other regional funding institutions such as the African Development Bank to develop innovative ways to finance human development programmes in Africa.

43. Maintaining Africa as the region of highest priority to UNICEF is a major challenge to the organization given the tremendous development needs of the continent and the difficulties of assuring the financial and human resources required to address them. It is a challenge that UNICEF fully accepts and intends to fulfil.

IV. CONCLUSION

44. For Africa, the 1990s goals are further away and will be a harder target to attain than for any other region, demanding a greater rate of change from current trends than has ever occurred in the development of the peoples of any region. If this task seems daunting, then the circumstances in which it will have to occur are even more challenging - increasing debt, continuing conflicts and growing pandemics such as AIDS. The prospects for success seem slim. Yet this amount of change in the human condition is possible, and even sustainable, if the right conditions are created in Africa and in the external economic environment. The challenge then is for Africa and its development partners to form a pact of mutual commitment to the achievement of the 1990s goals. This pact would aim to establish the broad conditions under which country-specific action for children could take place. The stimulus needed is simply mutual commitment and understanding. It has happened before: the pledge by one donor in the mid-1980s of support to UCI in Africa stimulated many countries to completely revamp their child health services in order to participate in the programme, with tremendously positive results, often beyond UCI programmes themselves. A similar pledge now, addressed to the issues of basic education, revitalized health care and the prevention of AIDS (and cognizant of the needs for debt reduction and conflict resolution), could stimulate African countries to revamp their social development systems to prioritize children and women. The national programmes of action are the mechanism for both African countries and their development partners to agree on the actions needed, while the forthcoming OAU conference is one opportunity for such pacts to be developed.

45. Based on the demonstrated commitment of African Governments and communities, efforts to achieve the 1990s goals in Africa can yield results many times more valuable than the contributions from external partners. Giving the highest priority to Africa is, therefore, an historic opportunity for UNICEF, for the United Nations and for the global community to contribute to and participate in the growth and development of the children and women of Africa.